EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

Always follow the advice of your provider (doctor/nurse practitioner/physician assistant). The instructions below are general and should only be done with their approval.

General Guidelines

- Warm-up: 10 minutes
- Aerobic: 30-60 minutes continuous or intermittent exercise
- Weight training: 10-20 minutes
- Cool-down: 10-15 minutes
- Stretching: Up to 5 minutes of light stretching

Warm-up
Easy/light movement that prepares muscles for aerobic and/or weight training exercise.

Aerobic

- Uses large muscle groups working together.
- Done 3-6 days per week at a moderate intensity. Over time, this should lower your blood pressure.
- Should cause an increase in heart rate (HR) and breathing rate, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation.
- Examples: walking, biking, and using a Nustep®.

Continuous exercise: exercise at the same pace for entire time. If unable to do 20 minutes of continuous exercise:
- Slow down and try to increase your time.
- Slowly increase intensity as you are able to increase your time.

If you can not do an entire workout at one time, try intermittent training – 20 minutes of aerobic exercise more than once a day, up to a total of 60 minutes.

Weight Training

- Aim for high repetitions (reps) with light weights 2-3 days per week,
- Start with 1 set of 12-15 reps per muscle group (legs, back, chest, shoulders, arms) and
- Increase up to 3 sets of 15 reps when able to tolerate.
- Strength training should only be performed after some form of cardiovascular warm-up.
- Be sure to breathe out on the exertional part of the exercise
- **NOTE:** it is not safe to do isometric training (pushing against a fixed object or a high resistance without movement) at this time.

Cool-down
Similar to the warm-up (slightly lengthened); light movement to help bring your heart rate (HR) and blood pressure back down to its resting level.

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Control #: 320   (August, 2008)
**Flexibility/Stretching**

- Stretching decreases muscle soreness and increases flexibility.
- Done after every workout session.
- Hold stretch up to 30 seconds (as tolerated) without moving, and be sure to keep breathing.

**PRECAUTIONS**

- Your physician should clear you before you start an exercise program.
- People with known high blood pressure and heart disease/chronic heart failure may need to lower workout intensity.
- Exercise may result in fluid loss (dehydration) so drink fluids to prevent low blood pressure after exercise. However, patients on fluid restriction should ask for more specific advice.

**WHEN TO CALL & WHO TO CALL**

If you have any of these symptoms before or during exercise, stop exercise immediately and contact your physician:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness, or
- Drop of 10mmHg in blood pressure (BP) during exercise (if able to check BP while exercising)
- Anything that feels different than usual.

**RATING OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE)**

Use this scale to find the intensity level of your exercise. A rating of 11-13 is ideal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RPE</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Very Light</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Very Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fairly Light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Somewhat Hard</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Very Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Very, Very Hard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For questions about exercise, call the exercise consultants at:

**Cardiovascular Center**  734-936-5627
**Cardiovascular Medicine at Domino’s Farms**  734-998-5666 or 998-7400

Developed by Preventive Cardiology (Exercise Physiologists), UMHS.